

REMARKS

The law firm associated with the undersigned attorney has been requested by the Assignee to take over responsibility for prosecuting this patent application. This response is thus herewith filed under Rule 34. The undersigned attorney expects to soon file a new Power of Attorney with a change of correspondence address. Should there be any questions, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at any of the numbers appearing below.

The first line of claim 15 was amended to cure the lack of antecedent basis noted by the Examiner. Although not mentioned by the Examiner, the same amendment was made to claim 16. The claims should now be free of rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim 25 was also amended simply to improve its clarity by removing occurrences of "a means for..".

Claims 1, 11 and 12 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dajer et al. (US 6,781,980) in view of commonly owned Shi et al. (US 6,332,083 B1). Claims 5-7 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dajer et al. in view of commonly owned Shi et al., and further in view of Yokev et al. (US 5,499,266). Claims 8-10 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dajer et al. in combination with commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Yokev et al., and further in view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over commonly owned Shi et al. (US 6,332,083 B1). Claims 15 and 16 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Yokev et al. Claims 20 and 25 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Smith et al. (US 6,009,124). Claim 21 is now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Lockhart et al. (US 6,173,189 B1). Claim 22 is now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Lockhart et al. and further in view of Yokev et al. Claim 23 is now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly

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owned Shi et al. in view of Shamlou et al. (US 6,690,949 B1). Claim 24 is now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Shamlou et al. and further in view of Yokev et al. Claim 26 is now rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over commonly owned Shi et al. in view of Smith et al. and further in view of Yokev et al.

The present application was filed after November 29, 1999. It is hereby made of record that Shi et al. (US 6,332,083 B1) and the present application were, at the time of invention of the present application, commonly owned. The Examiner is directed to MPEP 706.02(1)(2). In accordance with MPEP 706.02(1)(2)(II), it is understood that this statement alone is sufficient evidence to disqualify Shi et al. from being used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) against the claims of the present application.

This being the case, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw all of the rejections, and to allow the claims as they are presented for examination above.

Filed herewith is a Supplemental IDS that makes of record another commonly owned application, i.e., EP 0 678 974 A3. The fee of \$180 specified by 37 C.F.R. 1.17(p) is attached.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and remove the rejections of the claims, and to allow all of the pending claims as now presented for examination. An early notification of the allowability of all of the pending claims is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted:

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1/25/2006

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. BOX 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

1-25-06

Date

Ann Okrentowich

Name of Person Making Deposit